



# **Child Maintenance Service 2012 Scheme Experimental Statistics**

Background information and methodology

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## Purpose of the statistics

The aim of the publication is to give an overview of the child maintenance activity operated by the Child Maintenance Service (CMS). This publication contains the most up-to-date tables and breakdowns on the **Child Maintenance Service 2012 Scheme Statistics**.

## Uses and Users

The main users of the statistics in this document include: the public, external interest groups, Parliament, Department for Work and Pensions Ministers, Ministers and officials in other Government departments, academics, the media and external commentators and Department for Work and Pensions policy and operational officials.

These statistics are used by a number of internal stakeholders for:

- Monitoring and reporting performance trends against key indicators
- Informing briefing, lines to take and press releases
- Supporting operational functions
- Answering Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information requests
- Undertaking internal analysis and producing figures at a more detailed level
- Policy evaluation to help external users gauge the performance of the Child Maintenance Service

Our internet based publication means that we cannot ascertain all the varied uses of the numbers produced. However, we do know these statistics are used for:

- Providing general information on the Child Maintenance Service in Great Britain
- Measuring performance of the new child maintenance scheme
- Informing discussions and meetings with external stakeholders and MPs
- Social research and academic studies of the impact of social policy

## Introduction

The Child Maintenance Service publication contains information on cases being processed on the 2012 Statutory Child Maintenance Scheme, delivered by the Child Maintenance Service (CMS). This publication provides information about cases where CMS provides the maintenance calculation and the payment is made directly between the parents (Direct Pay) and cases where the CMS collects and forwards payments between parents and takes enforcement action if necessary (Collect and Pay).

It does not include information on the Child Support Agency (CSA). CSA statistics are available from the CSA Quarterly Statistical Summary and CSA Case Closure publications.

## Definitions and terminology within the statistics

**Accuracy:** A CMS calculation is considered accurate if it is within £1.00 or 2% of the true value based on the latest assessment.

**Appeals:** Where a client applies to Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service for an independent ruling as to whether a decision by DWP is correct or not.

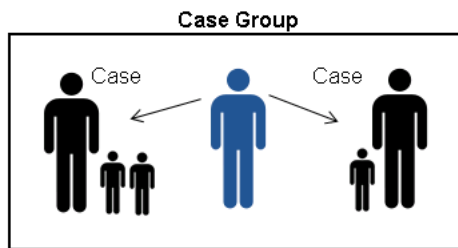
**Application Fee:** A £20 charge for opening a case on the CMS.

**Attachments:** Refers to enforcement actions taken by Sheriff Officers in Scotland on the Agency's instruction to attach certain goods and remove for auction if the debt is not settled. An attachment notice is served directly to the paying parent by a Sheriff's Officer.

**CSA Unpaid Maintenance:** Debt built up on a CSA case and moved over to the CMS system.

**Case:** A paying and a receiving parent and their children.

**Case Group:** One or more cases with the same paying parent.



**Caseload:** The number of cases managed on the CMS.

**Caseload in Enforcement:** Cases on which some action is recommended to address underpayment through a Regular Deduction Order, Lump Sum Deduction Order or Liability Order action.

**Cash Compliance:** The proportion of cash paid from paying parents with a current liability.

**Case Closure:** The process of shutting down cases on the CSA.

**Change of Circumstances:** When a client or third party notifies the Department that a client's details have changed and need to be updated.

**Charge for payment:** This is a Scottish action only. This is where, once the debt has been legally recognised via a Liability Order, the CMS refers the case to Sheriff Officers to serve the Charge for Payment on the Paying Parent.

**Charging Orders:** Enforcement action where a County Court order for a legally recognised unpaid maintenance is attached to the equity of a paying parent's property. Charging orders apply only in England and Wales.

**Children benefiting:** Children for whom a paying parent on Collect and Pay is contributing maintenance in full or in part in the last three months.

**Client:** A paying or receiving parent.

**CMS:** Child Maintenance Service.

**Compliance:** When a paying parent has contributed in full or part towards their maintenance payment via the Collect and Pay Service in the last three months.

**Collect and Pay:** Cases where the CMS manages payments between parents.

**Current Liability:** The amount of money a paying parent was expected to pay for the last three months.

**Deduction from Earnings Orders/Requests (DEO/R's):** When the CMS makes a request to an employer to deduct maintenance directly from the earnings of a paying parent.

**Deduction orders:** When the CMS applies to deduct maintenance directly from a paying parent's bank/building society account, following non-payment of maintenance. There are two types of deduction orders, **regular deduction order** which deducts a regular fixed amount in respect of either regular maintenance and/or unpaid maintenance and a **lump sum deduction order** which initially freezes, and later deducts a lump sum amount solely in respect of unpaid maintenance.

**Direct Pay:** Cases where the CMS calculates the appropriate level of maintenance but parents manage payments between themselves.

**Domestic Violence:** Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

**Enforcement Agent (Bailiff) actions:** Refers to actions in England & Wales. This is where the CMS has passed the unpaid maintenance amount owed by the Paying Parent, to an enforcement agency for collection (or equivalent). The objective of referring cases is to gain full payment from the Paying Parent. Enforcement Agents have legal powers to achieve this, for example, removal and sale of appropriate goods from the Paying Parent's home. The enforcement agency is also entitled to charge the paying parent a fee for undertaking this action.

**Intake:** The number of cases that join the CMS in the month.

**Liability order:** This is obtained from the court and shows they legally recognise that the debt is owed. This is the same in England, Wales and Scotland. This is required before the CMS can use legal enforcement powers (Diligence in Scotland) to recover debt.

**Mandatory Reconsiderations:** Where a client has asked the CMS to revise a decision.

**New Applications:** The total number of cases that request to join the CMS in the month. Around 99% of new applications go on to join the CMS.

**Order for sale:** An enforcement action taken once a final charging order has been granted against a property owned or jointly owned by the paying parent.

**Maintenance liability** The amount of money a paying parent is required to pay.

**Paused New Application:** A New Application can be Paused if impacted by an associated linked CSA schemes case which was on the Case Closure Journey.

**Payment Arrangements:** Parents can arrange to transfer money directly to each other (Direct Pay) or by using the CMS to manage payments on the parents behalf (Collect and Pay).

**Sanctions:** An enforcement power provided by a court to the CMS to recover money from a paying parent.

**Shared Care:** Where the qualifying child stays overnight with both paying and receiving parents.

**Total Maintenance Liability:** This is the sum of maintenance liability for those on a Collect and Pay or Direct Pay arrangement. Note that figures are cumulative.

## Status of the statistics

The UK Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as Official Experimental statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The statistics are designated 'experimental' because the methodology is in a state of review and is subject to change.

## Data Sources

Measure	Table	Other Sources
Accuracy	17	Management Information
Appeals	15	Management Information
Application fee exemptions	2	Administrative Datasets
Caseload	4	Administrative Datasets
Change of Circumstances	13	Administrative Datasets
Children Benefiting	5	Administrative Datasets
Civil Enforcement	12	Administrative Datasets
Complaints	16	Management Information
Compliance	8	Administrative Datasets
Enforcement	12	Administrative Datasets
Fraud and Investigations Actions	12	Management Information
Mandatory Reconsiderations	14	Administrative Datasets
Unpaid Maintenance	11	Management Information
Service Type	7	Administrative Datasets
Service Type Changes	10	Administrative Datasets
Shared care	6	Administrative Datasets
Telephony	18	Management Information
Time to clear Applications	3	Administrative Datasets
Intake	1	Administrative Datasets
Total Maintenance Liability	9	Management Information

## Data Quality

Prior to December 2013, cases are not representative of the mature caseload due to the 2012 Scheme being introduced using a phased approach. During the early stages of the 2012 Scheme, applications were still accepted on the 2003 Scheme where the criteria were not met to apply to the 2012 Scheme. Please see the [Child Support Agency Quarterly Summary of Statistics](#) for historical intake figures for CSA 1993 2003 cases.

For Time to clear New Applications, whilst some cases will have been cleared within the time band, since the period has not yet fully elapsed, complete data are not available to allow meaningful comparison with earlier periods. Therefore these figures are updated each quarter with the latest available information.

For all other statistics that are sourced from Management Information (MI); this MI is occasionally revised following publication. These changes tend to be minimal. As part of our methodology, small changes of less than 5% will not be updated in future publications.

## Feedback

We are constantly aiming to improve this release and its associated commentary. We would welcome any feedback you might have.

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## 2012 Scheme Overview

### Family Based Arrangement

Arranged privately between parents without government involvement. These are flexible and easily adapted to the family needs and do not have any charges added to them. These are often the best option for everyone involved.

### Child Maintenance Service

Used when clients are unable to make a Family Based Arrangement.

Since June 2014 new applications cost a £20 application fee (unless under 19 or a victim of domestic violence).

Contact is made with HMRC to find income details of the paying parent.

Payment is made either directly or collected via CMS.

### Direct Pay

CMS decide the amount to be paid and the payments happen privately between parents.

There are no charges for using Direct Pay.

### Collect and Pay

CMS decide the amount to be paid; they collect the money from the paying parent and pay it out to the receiving parent.

Since August 2014 the paying parent pays a 20% collection charge and the receiving parent has a 4% reduction on their payment.

### Maintenance

Cases move onto an agreed payment schedule and are reviewed annually.

Cases with no changes in circumstances continue until the youngest child on a case turns 20 years old

### Direct Pay is ineffective

Parents can move to Collect and Pay

### Collect and Pay is effective

Parents free to return to Direct Pay after six months.

### Enforcement

Where payments are missed or not made in full the account will have **unpaid maintenance**.

Money owed can be taken by a **Deduction from Earnings** or in serious cases a **custodial sentence** can be given to someone who refuses to pay child maintenance



